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11 September 1980

Latin America Report

(FOUO 18/80)



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LATIN AMERICA REPORT

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CONTENTS

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

- Cuban Delegate Affirms No Break in Venezuela Relations
(PRELA, 26 Aug 80) 1

ARGENTINA

- New Bolivian Regime, Nation's Current Events Discussed
(Sergio Ceron; LA OPINION, 10 Aug 80) 4
- Impact of Peronist Participation in Political Dialog Analyzed
(Eduardo J. Paredes; LA OPINION, 10 Aug 80) 9
- Israeli Minister of Commerce on Objectives of Recent Visit
(Gideon Patt Interview; CONVICCION, 30 Jul 80) 14

BARBADOS

- Carrington Visit Seen as Move To Increase Trade
(Hubert Williams; FRELA, 12 Aug 80) 18

CUBA

- Huber Matos Plans Long-Term Counterrevolution
To Overthrow Castro
(Huber Matos Interview; CAMBIO 16, 13 Jul 80) 20
- Raul Roa Sends Message to Antinuclear Congress
(PRELA, 3 Aug 80) 25

NICARAGUA

- Briefs
Break With Bolivia 26

- a -

[III - LA - 144 FOUO]

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PERU

Police Arrest Leftist Terrorists in Ayacucho (PRELA, 5 Aug 80)	27
Naming of Ex-ITT Executive to Communications Post Questioned (PRELA, 22 Aug 80)	28

VENEZUELA

Dorticos Extols Cuba's Experience on Crime (Sergio Medina; PRELA, 27 Aug 80)	29
Briefs	
Coffee-Deficit	31
Textile Workers' Strike Continues	31

- b -

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ARGENTINA

NEW BOLIVIAN REGIME, NATION'S CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSED

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 10 Aug 80 p 12

[Article by Sergio Ceron]

[Text] It may seem daring or indiscreet. At the present time, saying that the Argentine Government looks favorably on that of Bolivia represents a rowing against the tide. It would be far less risky to proclaim, as Ted Kennedy did, that it is necessary to be agreeable toward Cuba or Nicaragua if, at the same time, a group of initiatives is added to pressure Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala and Haiti.

On Tuesday, in Cordoba, Jorge Rafael Videla confronted the predictable wrath of those who think that there are no enemies among the left, and that they lie unfailingly with the right.

This Manichaeism that has infected the world denounces the military governments which annihilated the subversion in the Southern Cone as intolerable, but hastens to appear pragmatic, and even cordial, when it justifies dialog with Fidel Castro or puts up with the pathological irascibility of the Ayatollah Khomeini.

The Democratic Party platform, although maintaining the intolerance toward the military governments of Latin America, has taken a step to the right of the senator from Massachusetts in citing the danger of Russian and Cuban intervention in the continent. Nevertheless, there is still a noteworthy absence of flexibility in the analysis of the situation, to the point where it does not hesitate to put the Argentine military regime and the Haitian tyranny in the same category. There is even a marked difference between the governments of Argentina, Chile, El Salvador and Guatemala which the Democrats do not perceive.

But despite this reality that is well known to our diplomats, the chief executive did not vacillate in proclaiming Buenos Aires' rapprochement with the military government of La Paz. However, he did not do so with a display of defiant arrogance, but rather by explaining the Argentine reaction to a fait accompli, and the reason that the national interests advised taking a certain direction in dealing with external affairs.

4

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In the first place, as Videla reiterated with the same candor as in his previous admission, the Argentine state did not foster the change of government in Bolivia, nor give any advice on how to carry out the military movement. Coups (he remarked sensibly) are not made according to prescription, nor are there advisable methods for exporting.

Before the seizure of power by the Armed Forces in Bolivia, Argentina was offered two options: The first, which Videla described as "formally correct," was the acceptance of a government resulting from elections, that is, the government of Hernan Siles Suazo, which was dangerously threatening to slide toward the left, not only because of the candidate's ideological leanings, but also because of the force of the socioeconomic situation in which the high plateau nation was submerged. The occurrence of a process similar to the one experienced by Argentina between 1973 and 1976, which was quite possible in view of the dynamics of Bolivian political activity, was a high-grade risk for the military government. One could already foresee the outbreak of a leftist campaign, with heavily Marxist overtones, which would put on the northern border a focal point for attacking the life style selected by the Argentine people and for constantly challenging the Buenos Aires government. Furthermore, it would be impossible to deny the possibility that, on the streets of La Paz, on an occasion similar to the marking of the first anniversary of the Sandinist government of Nicaragua, the top-ranking leaders of the Argentine guerrillas might be observed marching on parade.

The second option was not contingent on the desires of the Plate government, but rather on the vicissitudes of political activity in Bolivia. It materialized with the coup d'etat headed by Gen Luis Garcia Meza. Obviously (it could not be otherwise), it was received with relief at the Casa Rosada, because it decompressed a sensitive area of the country's foreign policy. As a result, the implementation of the Estrada doctrine of noninterference in the internal affairs of nations and of automatic recognition for governments controlling the national territory was decided upon, not only in adherence to an international legal tradition, but also with real satisfaction.

Moreover, Videla took the liberty of advancing a few steps when he did not reject the notion (in this case, tantamount to announcing) that the government might contribute food and credit "so that the Bolivian people will be able to overcome their difficulties again."

To be sure, this decision might evoke the adverse reaction of those who are usually motivated by ideological reflexes in politics. The gesture of recognizing a government of the Bolivian military, who first made the elections possible and later obliterated them with a blow of the hand upon the victory of a candidate whom they considered unacceptable, is not appealing. At least they did not want to give Siles Suazo a chance to show that he was as inflexible and Manichaeian as his enemies and that, lacking a sense of reality, he would lead the country into a blind alley.

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In the long run, however, nations must be guided in their actions by their permanent interests, and not be circumstantial reactions of sympathy. The friendship or mere proximity of Hernan Siles Suazo could be associated with "dangerous relations" for an Argentina heading toward democratization, but still ruled by a military government. Luis Garcia Meza offers a grimmer and less likable countenance to a large percentage of Argentines, but he is an infinitely slighter political risk.

For the present, in the message that was read on 6 August, the high plateau country's chief executive announced the Armed Forces' commitment to restore democracy during the course of a process which could last 10 years.

Whether Garcia Meza's statement is a pretext or sincere, the fact is that it cancels in part the negative impression created by previous statements to the effect that he would remain in power for 20 years.

The Argentine position is not easy, inasmuch as it is at odds with the declaration issued in late July by the Organization of American States which, for the first time in its history, deplored a coup d'etat in one of its member nations. A total of 16 nations voted in favor of the motion for censure, four (including Argentina) abstained and only three voted against it.

The latter seven countries placed emphasis on the traditional principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of nations established in Article 18 of the OAS charter. The latter states, verbatim: "No state or group of states has a right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for whatever reason, in the internal or external affairs of any other. The foregoing principle excludes not only armed force, but also any other type of meddling or tendency interfering in the personality of the state, or in the political, economic and cultural elements which comprise it."

On Saturday, 2 August, the Argentine representative to the OAS, Raul Quijano, announced that certain countries were considering recognition of the Bolivian military regime in the near future, although he did not think that this would occur on a mass scale.

Meanwhile, the Argentine Government is striving to maintain a policy of friendship and cooperation with the group of Andean nations which is, paradoxically, the main force opposing the La Paz regime.

On 5 August, the minister of foreign relations issued a communique reporting that he had taken cognizance of the declaration made by the presidents of those nations in Lima on 29 July. In it, the Andean chief executives emphasize "in particular, the strong channels for dialog and agreement that have been opened with Argentina and Brazil in the Latin American area, and their favorable prospects for regional integration and cooperation." And, insofar as our country is concerned, they add: "In this connection, we express our desire to promote action aimed at signing an agreement for cooperation and development between the Andean Group and Argentina, within the context of the new system of regional integration."

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Argentina has, from the outset, voiced approval for a policy of subcontinental integration, wherein it has assumed a vanguard role. The complementary status of its economy with those of the Andean Pact nations, and the possibility of transferring intermediate industrial technology required by those markets and of importing minerals and raw materials that they do not produce, indicate the importance of that integration, which would help to foster mutual development. The Andean Pact market, numbering 70 million people, with its gradual but constant economic progress, is a desirable target for the national economy, provided the current obstacles to an exporting policy are surmounted.

On another subject, the British minister of trade, Cecil Parkinson, has been a guest in Buenos Aires since last Tuesday. Old Albion, after having directed its post-war energy toward the Commonwealth and Africa, and subsequently toward the European Economic Community, now realizes that it has unfortunately neglected its traditional relations with Latin America. The beneficiary of the decadence of the Spanish empire, and promoter of the independence of the former Hispanic colonies, Great Britain exploited its ties with the subcontinent to provide raw materials for its industries, which in turn had an avid market for their products.

The worldwide recession has forced the industrial powers to open new markets for their exports; and the pressure from the internal crisis has made London turn its glance toward its old Latin American relations. Argentina represents one of the most highly esteemed targets in the region. Hence the hope expressed by Parkinson, upon arriving at Ezeiza, to the effect that "the next few years will mark the beginning of a more dynamic period in our relations as countries, with major commercial exchanges."

The British minister is convinced that Great Britain can offer much to Argentina, especially in the field of advanced technology, such as that related to energy, communications, transportation and mining. However, Parkinson's statements contain an almost obsessive recurrence of the topic of energy. On several occasions he stressed the fact that his country has the best experts and resources in the world for the development of petroleum and energy resources of all kinds. The gaze of the British is fixed on the basin adjoining the Malvinas Islands, where one of the most promising petroleum deposits in the world is located. But the British, who know something about politics, are clearly aware that the only way in which they can develop this basin is through an agreement with Argentina. And they also surmise that such an agreement entails recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the unredeemed archipelago. The world's dynamics, with the progress made in decolonization, have, with the passage of time, weakened the position of London, which will eventually have to yield to the legitimate right demonstrated by Argentina to recover its islands. Hence, it is a matter of "timing," something which the British are experts in handling. In brief, Great Britain is attempting to negotiate the transfer of the Malvinas through an association with Argentina in the development of the resources in the nearby waters: petroleum, and

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"krill" as well. We must not allow ourselves to be swayed by obstinacy; if negotiations of that type suit the interests of Argentina, inasmuch as we shall have to seek the aid of foreign technology in order to undertake such activities, we must not succumb to scruples of a sanctimonious nature. The goal is to regain the Malvinas and to develop our resources as soon as possible. If that goal can be attained without bloodshed, all the better. If not, we shall have to wait until the power relationship on the political or military level is in our favor, in order to attain it. In the meantime, we should not turn down the negotiations a priori, if they are worthy, and not detrimental to the economic interests of the republic.

There is some good news. The feasibility studies on the construction of the gas pipeline to Uruguay and the eventual supply of the fluid to the fraternal nation are entering their final phase. And we use the term "fraternal" without easily resorting to the Latin American rhetoric which has prompted us to mention as such even countries with which we have had a history of confrontations and discord. If we have a fraternal country, it is the Oriental Republic of Uruguay; so much so that many of us think that we constitute a single River Plate nation, organized into two sovereign states. This juridical reality is incontrovertible and, at least for the time being, not subject to change. But, why is a change necessary when, despite the legal borders, events are uniting Argentines and Uruguayans increasingly?

Uruguay is the top priority in the national geopolitics; because everything unites us with the Banda Oriental: history, blood, culture and interests. What else? The forthcoming creation of a common market between the two nations, which is currently being arranged, and the possible fueling of Uruguay's industries with the gas originating in Argentina's geological depths, are two new reflections of a chain of events strengthening the old ties of the past, with a view toward the future.

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ARGENTINA

IMPACT OF PERONIST PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL DIALOG ANALYZED

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 10 Aug 80 p 13

[Article by Eduardo J. Paredes: "Checkmate for Bittel, Stalemate With Matera and Suspended Game With Robledo"]

[Text] Within a few days, the political dialog arranged by the government through the Ministry of Interior will embark upon an area of particular concern to the small politicized world. If there are no intervening personal problems which would necessitate a change in schedule, on Tuesday, 19 August, the Peronist leaders Raul Matera, Alberto Iturbe, Enrique Osella Munoz, Rodolfo Tedera del Franco and Delia D. de Parodi will enter Gen Albano Eduardo Harguindeguy's office. The last-mentioned in the group is a member of the board of directors of the Justicialist Doctrinal Reaffirmation Movement, an internal branch of the Peronist movement reluctantly accepted by the verticalist sector which (ostensibly) controls the party's National Council and its National Congress.

It must be admitted that Harguindeguy and his advisers have, with this invitation, shown more political acumen than they are given credit for by the more skeptical analysts. After the diatribes of the acting vice president of the Peronist presidency, notary Deolindo Bittel, especially those relating to the issue of human rights when the commission assigned to that area from the Organization of American States was in the country, the government could have refused to invite him to the dialog. The boundary between Bittel's role as an opponent and that of an enemy of the process lies in an indefinite area. Bittel is more than an opponent. His political preachings point to the collapse of the process, without regard for what happens.

Behind Bittel there are three qualified Peronist leaders who do not share the verticalist phobia of the Chaco notary, but who do not want to split the party: Angel Robledo, Eloy Camus and Italo Luder. Any one of the three could have served perfectly as a spokesman with the minister. Preliminary feelers indicated that they could not accept the invitation without causing a divisive snub to Bittel. And this is understandable insofar as they are concerned. If the process asks the Peronists for a change of attitude that will make it a party which abides by the rules of the game, it would be rather unreasonable

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to request that their leaders begin by disowning their last authorities, even though they might suspect that the latter should voluntarily accept the benefits of political retirement.

Furthermore, the Interior Ministry could not choose as a guest a sentimental Peronist completely dissociated from Justicialist political activity, who would not offer any representative status much less a political mentality in line with the party which was in the majority until 1973.

On the contrary, the invitation was conveyed to an internal Peronist group which, although it was strictly cut off from the party management by the Lopez-Registas, never had Isabel's blessing and was constantly repulsed by the "surrounding" element, is part of the truly orthodox former leadership of the movement, at least insofar as Iturbe and Delia Parodi are concerned. Added to them is a talented man (Tecera del Franco), who played an important role during the neo-Peronist "entente" between politicians and trade unionists from 1963 to 1965; as well as a practical politician (Osella Munoz), who restored the antiveriticism in the last Peronist legislative group in the lower chamber; and Dr Raul Matera, a Peronist with a humanist, Christian quality, who never had the definitive coronation as a "caudillo," but who has a feature which very few Justicialists possess: he is a possible candidate.

Who Are They?

Before analyzing what this contact between five of the Peronists' most prominent members and the political minister of the military government will mean to Peronism, it behooves us to make a brief review of the current ideological status of those who were invited.

In addition to being gifted by nature so that his prodigious fingers can remove a brain clot without contributing to the economic progress of business firms engaged in funeral services, Raul Matera is sufficiently egocentric to want to be president of the nation, and sufficiently intelligent to suspect that this is not easy. The neurosurgeon stopped believing in Peron for as long as Peron had stopped believing in him; but he is absolutely sincere when he says that he believes in the Justicialist doctrine as the historical starting point for a social revolution aimed at raising the standard of the individual on the basis of a political system with liberty and strong social justice. Matera has a sense of practical Justicialism, rather than mental Justicialism. In addition, he is a sincere advocate of agreement with regard to the progressive parties and the military government. It should be recalled that, some time ago, Matera called for a civilian-military convergence on a common program, to which he added the Church as an essential participant.

Iturbe is a very special case: A person with political shrewdness, which has become brilliant, at the same time he has been careful about his personal image and his convictions, despite many attempts by Peron himself (whose "personal representative" he was) to associate him with particular areas, which he has no reason to regret. He became knowledgeable about the internal life of the Peronist movement to the same extent as (or perhaps more so

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than) the caudillo himself; which could have proved fatal....But, when his quarter of an hour of private meeting with the exiled leader was over, he was content with a role of political mentor in orthodox circles that were not outdated. The politician from Jujuy was clever enough to keep his distance from the moods of Peron, without thereby abandoning Peronism, a strategy which kept him safe from the cruel buffoonery which accompanied the end of the one who had been constitutional president three times. Iturbe has told many Peronist leaders that "it is preferable to have a party with fewer votes than with more Marxists and Nazis," in what has been interpreted as a stand in favor of an orthodox, principled party organization, with its leadership simultaneously renewed, rather than the chaotic movement-oriented method whereby one always reaches the Government Residence, asking the next day what the devil to do....

Dr Tecera del Franco is a victim of generation. Many of his age yielded to Peronism because they were left of the conservatives and right of the socialists. He is an intellectual, a person who would stand out in the right wing of the labor movement; but, in order to do so, he would have to go to England. When neo-Peronism developed, through the Popular Union, Tecera del Franco was prominent among a group of political and trade union leaders who were beginning to like Justicialist political control without having to wait for the primer every day from Madrid. And, when Peronism became imbued with Marxism, through the "special training," his noble countenance put up with the bombarding of rotten eggs with which the Peronist University Youth (a collateral group active in the university areas) received those who rejected violence as a political method and the ideological perversion of Peronism. He had sufficient dignity to clean his coat and leave that university, which had become converted into a guerrilla training camp. Reviled by the left, and detested by the mediocre verticalist group, he went discreetly into winter quarters. Today, he is a politician who has solemnly buried the Argentina of 1945, and who is confident of an economic development with social justice and effective educational progress. As Borges might say, he has committed the worst of sins that anyone could commit, at least in the Peronist movement: He tried to make use of his own political thinking.

Within the group in question, Osella Munoz, from Santa Fe, is the politician with uninterrupted activity despite the ideological vicissitudes of his party. Very much admired by trade union sectors, he led the antiverticalist movement in the Chamber of Deputies during the heyday of Lopez Rega, something which could have brought him excommunication from the party or a bullet in the head. Fortunately, nothing of the sort happened. Just as Tecera del Franco is one of the Peronists who seem like conservatives expelled for speaking ill of Roca, Osella seems like a radical expelled for speaking ill of Alvear. In the last parliamentary bloc, he was unquestionably one of the best Peronist legislators. To the verticalists, he is a hard bone to chew, but one for whom they cannot find any reason to crucify. When Justicialism has to become organized as a party, Osella could prove very useful in performing the miracle of making the Peronists like internal democracy.

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In the case of Delia de Parodi, there may be some confusion concerning a party such as the Peronist. Possibly because she reached political maturity in excellent mental and physical condition, she is a leader without a complex about a "women's branch," that kind of grotesque "spray" militarization which converted the civil rights of Argentine women (an indisputable achievement of Peronism) into a dressed up version of the Gestapo. It should not be thought that Mrs Parodi has reneged on historical Peronism. On the contrary, she still has a deep admiration for what she describes as the intuitive revolutionary spirit of Eva Peron. But she has proven sufficiently intelligent to realize which aspects of Peronism have finally gone down in history, and what the inevitable path of the movement's progress is. Her internal experience has followed a course parallel to that of Iturbe. And it must be admitted that, in the tragic years of the internal struggles of Peronism, she refused to choose between flatterers and divisionists. Of the five who have been invited to the dialog, Delia Parodi is the one who stands most to the left regarding the ideological concept of Justicialism, imbued with the most blatant guidelines from the party lexicon concerning social justice. Among Argentine women politicians (who are not too numerous) she has won a place by dint of errors, experience and considerable grief. If things did not go better for her, it was perhaps because she was convinced that loyalty and obsequiousness were not synonymous.

And What About Verticalism?

At the present time, the Peronist contribution to the analysis of the political bases of the process will not be a bouquet of flowers. But no one could believe that the dialog of 19 August will fail to be of fundamental importance to the difficult internal movements of Peronism during this period preceding that of the most spectacular decisions.

It may be anticipated that notary Bittel will launch forth in an attack against the Reaffirmation Group, in search of a party sanction, but he will clash with the easy-going strategy of Camus from San Juan, who controls the congress members who must decide when a case should be turned over to the Court of Discipline, a tool with which the verticalists frightens those who refuse to yield unwillingly.

But for those who are now following, with considerable patience, this forced reign without a kingdom of Bittel, as in the case of Luder, Camus and Robledo, the entry of the independent quintet into the Government Residence will be a positive experience. In the first place, for a public which does not know and is not interested in knowing about internal struggles and personal contemptibility, the episode will be converted into a Peronist presence in the incipient context of openness toward the institutional realm. Secondly, Robledo has assumed responsibility for maintaining channels of communication with various party sectors, intelligently taking care not to isolate Bittel in uncomfortable positions. In that respect, the opinions of Matera and company expressed to the military government will be of use to him for future

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strategies. Thirdly, Robledo realizes that this process is not like previous de facto situations, and that Peronism will have to operate as a democratic party whether Bittel likes it or not.

In the meantime, there are politicians who, after this invitation, will consider it more than likely that other similar ones will be tendered to Peronist sectors of the so-called intermediate generation, advancing resolutely on behalf of an orthodoxy imbued with renewal.

Meanwhile, General Harguindeguy has no reason to envy Korchnoy for anything: After 19 August, he will do the suspending in a favorable position, without any need to kick the chessboard....With a single move, he will checkmate Bittel, offer Robledo suspension and reach an honorable stalemate with Matera. And, as for the claim that Peronism has difficulty with chess....it has all the pawns....

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ISRAELI MINISTER OF COMMERCE ON OBJECTIVES OF RECENT VISIT

Buenos Aires CONVICCION in Spanish 30 Jul 80 p 24

[Interview with the Israeli minister of industry, commerce and tourism, Gideon Patt; date and place not given]

[Text] Gideon Patt, 47, is coming to Argentina. In this exclusive interview with TIEMPO of Tel Aviv, the minister of industry, commerce and tourism discusses the reasons for his visit and the importance of growing trade between Israel and the countries of South America.

[Question] Is this your first visit to Argentina?

[Answer] To Argentina, yes. I will be going there to take part in the Joint Economic Commission talks and to return the visit to Israel about a year ago by the Argentine delegation, when Undersecretary of International Commerce Dumas came.

[Question] How are relations between Argentina and Israel?

[Answer] We have had very good relations for many years and we sincerely appreciate them. We are, of course, interested in maintaining and further developing economic relations as well. We buy about \$100 million worth of goods a year from Argentina, and most of it, of course, is meat and fish. We sold Argentina \$17 million worth of goods last year, and I hope that this figure increases somewhat this year. We want to narrow the gap as much as possible and we want to take a look at the possibility of buying goods other than meat, which for now represents two-thirds of Argentina's sales to us.

Therefore, on this occasion, when both of us ministers will chair the commission, I will study the possibilities in both directions: expanding both our purchases and our sales. I am also interested in securing cooperation in research and development.

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I will ask the Argentines to offer me other products, raw materials perhaps, although it 's hard for me to tell now what they might want to sell. I will ask only that the increase in trade be mutual. For our part, we will try harder to bring up the issue of women's wear. I will try to boost our sales of complex machinery, medical equipment for example. I will also submit a long list of items, in the hope that they will be interested in them.

I am also interested in working out an exchange of delegations of industrialists.

We buy raw materials all over the world. It depends on what Argentina has to offer us. I cannot demand that they sell me certain products, and precisely because of the friendly relations between our countries, I cannot demand that they buy Israeli goods without opening the door wider to their exports to us.

[Question] Might the increase in trade with Argentina bring about an improvement in Zim transportation services to South America?

[Answer] A country's maritime shipping lines depend on the extent of its trade. If trade increases, I will insist that additional vessels from our national transportation line head for Argentina. If not, we cannot require the ships to continue their crossings at only half-capacity. The visit by the Argentine Government delegation last year boosted our trade a great deal.

[Question] From a political standpoint, is Israel perhaps deeply aware of the importance of relations with the countries of Latin America?

[Answer] You are right. That is why I was asked to leave a week early for Argentina and stop off in Peru for the inauguration. I will also be in Uruguay and possibly Brazil. We see the continent of South America as an enormous market, and I am saying this as minister of industry. This is an enormous market that we have not yet even begun to tap. But in addition to all this, the continent is growing in international political importance and in recent years has been taking a more independent stand, demonstrating great power with its combined votes in international forums and a great deal of influence on the Third World.

[Question] How does Argentina stand in Israel's trade with Latin America?

[Answer] It accounted for 6.5 percent in 1977 and 22 percent in 1978; it was 21.6 percent in 1979. As a percentage it looks like a lot, but in absolute figures it comes to about \$17 million.

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The biggest category of Israeli exports to Argentina is chemicals. But this is not the category that I will be trying to develop on this trip.

[Question] When you speak of industrial cooperation, are you referring to the sale of know-how or the creation of joint plants?

[Answer] I am referring to three different aspects: research and development as a whole, sales of know-how and the creation of joint plants. The latter could be reciprocal; Argentina and Israel could undertake joint production activities inasmuch as we are, of course, close to the EEC.

[Question] Is the intention to put these industries up in Argentina or Israel?

[Answer] That depends on the requirements. I, of course, would like to see more Argentine investment in our country, but naturally this is closely related to the product and the manufacturing conditions. It could turn out that it would be a good idea to produce part of a given item in Argentina and to finish it off in Israel, or vice-versa. We would have to take a close look at this for each product.

The aim of the talks is to forge ahead. It is not enough that we buy meat from Argentina, and I am not that certain that this is what Buenos Aires would like to sell at the moment.

[Question] You will be representing the country with the world's worst inflation in a country that recently lost that crown. Would you be interested in studying the economic measures whereby the Argentine Government succeeded in cutting its inflation rate?

[Answer] We are trying to study this issue all over the world. For example, there was 120 percent inflation in Argentina while the value of the dollar rose only 50 percent, and this became a decisive factor for exports. In contrast, we more or less index the dollar to our inflation rate. That is why we are now the inflation champs, and this is not a title to be proud of. If we had kept the dollar at 50 percent of the inflation rate, we would not have had 120 percent inflation either. We are paying a very high price for developing our exports, and along with this we have a very serious balance of payments problem and we have to constantly make sure that we have enough money to buy raw materials such as oil, for which we will pay \$2.25 billion this year. Exports are the only way that we can obtain these reserves.

If we had seen to it that the dollar did not rise along with the index, I think that our inflation rate would be at least 30 or 40 percent lower.

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[Question] Nevertheless, last month new restrictions on exporters were announced, reducing credit and boosting the interest rate.

[Answer] I think that those regulations are of minor importance, and that is why I did not oppose them. The initial proposals were much more drastic and could have seriously jeopardized our exports, and I opposed them. What resulted now is unquestionably favorable to exports. A slight increase in the cost of lire or a slight decrease in liquidity will not hurt exports, and if profits drop, it will only be by one or one and a half percent. Any more could have jeopardized increased exports.

[Question] What is the extent of tourism between Argentina and Israel?

[Answer] There is very little. You have to keep in mind that great distances are involved. I will try to stimulate tourism from there, but I honestly do not think that much can be accomplished. Vacationing Argentines have available the enormous continent of South America, where there is a great deal to see. Moreover, there are no direct flights.

[Question] Is there any chance that El-Al will inaugurate a route to South America, perhaps to Brazil, Argentina and Chile?

[Answer] If I knew that this would increase tourism from South America to Israel, I would support such a route. An international agreement is needed for this, of course. I will not take up this issue, on this visit at least.

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17
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CUBA

HUBER MATOS PLANS LONG-TERM COUNTERREVOLUTION TO OVERTHROW CASTRO

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 13 Jul pp 62-63

[Interview with Huber Matos by Miguel Ramos in Paris; date not given]

[Text] Huber Matos, the major who helped Fidel Castro bring about the revolution in Cuba, in exile after 20 years in prison, wants now to organize a new revolution against the regime which betrayed him.

He still wears his major's star in his lapel. He has worn it whenever he has been able to do so, because, in spite of having spent 20 years in prison, Huber Matos, comrade-in-arms of Fidel Castro during the revolution, has not lost his hope of making Cuba "an independent and democratic country, although it might have to take up arms again." Released on 21 October 1979, he is attempting now to reunite the anti-Castro elements scattered in exile. With his permanent headquarters in Miami and surrounded by 10 bodyguards--he prefers to call them "brothers-in-arms" because, among other reasons, he does not pay them to protect him--Matos is now traveling through Europe, and at the end of this month he will go to Spain, after having visited France and England. In Paris he spoke with Miguel Ramos of CAMBIO 16 before continuing his journey to Spain.

[Question] How is the overseas Cuban resistance organized?

[Answer] To begin with, it is divided. For some 20 years the Cuban exiles have been trying to fight Castro in the hope of overthrowing him, and they have split up into a number of groups, the majority of them already defunct. Among these groups, some based their hopes on the Americans bringing Castro down, which is a completely erroneous strategy, without foundation. Others believed that Castro would simply fall from his own weight. Today there are still several different groups in existence. The one we are now trying to form is expected to be a broad-based popular organization with a revolutionary outlook. As we understand it, we are revolutionaries because we are fighting for the triumph of liberty, justice and national independence, things which do not exist today in Cuba, because Fidel Castro has completely compromised our independence, placing it in the hands of the Soviet Union.

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Nor are we, in addition, at all in agreement with the conditions of the pre-revolutionary era. That is, we are working not only to destroy communism, but also to build a Cuban nation which responds to the needs of the people. Nor do we have a party mentality. We think the main thing at this time is to orient the struggle, departing from the premise that we cannot defeat Castro from exile, but that it is the Cuban people who must produce the change on their own soil, in spite of the omnipresent Castro political police, the G-2, which hinders any clandestine movement on the island. We conceive this in terms of a long-term confrontation?

[Question] An armed confrontation?

[Answer] In the first place, our strategy is one of ideological confrontation, through propaganda, to inform the Cuban people about the democratic alternative, to explain to them that 21 years of communism have passed and that the problems, instead of being resolved, are increasing. The youth are completely frustrated--a youth which, in addition, has been trained by Castro and is the sector of the population which gives him the biggest headache. We are trying to channel all these malcontents who reject the system into a popular struggle which will result in an uprising. We know, for example, that the Armed Forces, through obligatory military service, are full of people who are against the system, and that is the most vulnerable spot in the entire Castro structure: having an army which cannot be loyal to him in all circumstances.

Advantages Under Batista

[Question] When you speak of an uprising, are you thinking once again of the Sierra Maestra?

[Answer] No; for the moment a guerrilla struggle is not possible in Cuba.

[Question] In what respect was the political, social and economic situation under Batista, which produced a popular uprising, different from that which is current under Fidel Castro?

[Answer] The differences are great, first of all, because Batista never terrorized the people as Castro is doing today. The Batista government was one of laws with the support of a huge military apparatus; but it was a government which had no repressive purge techniques. Castro, on the other hand, has raised repression to the category of a science and a technique with the advice of Soviets who are in the Ministry of Interior. Also, in Batista's time there was a free peasant class, while at present all the peasants must be organized into a national association which controls their movements.

[Question] Do you plan, within the limits of its possibilities, to bring weapons into Cuba through the anti-Castro rebellion?

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[Answer] We haven't gotten that far yet. We understand that there is a first stage, which is one of ideological confrontation, but we do not discount the possibility of armed struggle. And even were such a thing planned, I don't think I should answer that question.

[Question] You have cited Soviet participation in the Cuban Ministry of Interior. How great do you think the Soviet influence is in your country?

[Answer] More than the numbers, we are concerned with the scope of Soviet influence, which reaches into industry, politics, the services, into education itself. We Cubans are grieved, we are ashamed, to be repeating what the Soviet Union says, to be serving as its armed instrument.

[Question] Was the occupation of the embassy by more than 10,000 persons foreseeable?

[Answer] No. That sudden and massive emigration can be explained by all the repression to which I previously referred. It is enough to point out only one thing: that the majority of the refugees were young people, and that is because Castroism, which educates them, suffocates them politically and socially. In the schools the students are obliged to work, to applaud Castro, to be stalwart supporters of the system and to do preposterous things constantly. For example, physicians, in order to receive their license to practice, must climb the highest mountain on the island, Turquino Peak, five times.

[Question] Does the presence of Cubans in Africa also annoy the people in general?

[Answer] I believe so. It is the Soviet Union, apparently, which defrays the cost of this Cuban presence in Africa, but there is no doubt that our people, who have on that continent 40,000 of the 100,000 men who make up their national army, are paying for part of this war with their own economic resources. And that is one of the great Cuban tragedies, in the sense that a people living in poverty must, in addition, pay an army which, in the final analysis, is nothing more than a mercenary force, because it is not we as Cubans who solve anything in Africa; rather it is the Soviet Union which solves things and which continues to expand its sphere of influence.

The Wages of Fear

[Question] What is the salary of a Cuban soldier in Africa?

[Answer] There are two kinds of payment: that paid to a person who serves temporarily and who has preferred to do his military service there, which is 7 pesos per month; and that given to a military professional identified with the political system, which is almost double the minimum salary, or 200 pesos per month.

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[Question] Do these soldiers who are sent to Africa enlist as volunteers?

[Answer] Apparently, yes; but the fact is that everyone who refuses to go to Africa is punished, and depending on the manner of his refusal, he may even go to jail. I had jailmates in prison who were there for that reason. One must take into account, in addition, the awareness which is instilled into the youth, who from 15 years of age is considered ready for military service, to which he will then have to give from 3 to 5 years.

Castro, Lover of Weapons

[Question] You have been imprisoned longer than any other political prisoner under the Castro regime. How were your 20 years in prison?

[Answer] During all that time, Castro was trying to kill me slowly, making a poor lunatic of me, constantly causing a psychological instability in me. Sometimes I was physically mistreated without any justification; at other times, my few books were taken away, and on more than one occasion I was thrown into a dark cell where I did not eat for 2 or 3 days. I can tell you that Castro vented his anger on me in a dreadful way, and history has shown that he is the guilty party and the traitor. His cooperation with the USSR is so obvious; I myself had to put up with Soviet military inspections while I was in prison.

[Question] What were those inspections like?

[Answer] They were and they still are just short visits, but they respond to the Soviet technique of controlling political prisoners, demeaning their personalities little by little. They are the ones who decide how the prisoner is to be treated.

[Question] During all this time that you were imprisoned, did Castro ever visit you?

[Answer] No, never. The last time we saw each other was during one of the appearances at the trial, in December 1959--a trial which was a real farce.

[Question] How did you meet?

[Answer] It was in the Sierra Maestra, when I arrived at the head of an armed expedition from Costa Rica. He appeared to me at that time to be a big kid, so happy, so euphoric, examining the weapons we had brought. We arrived in the mountains with 5 tons of arms and ammunition, and that man grabbed one weapon after another and fired wildly into the night, shouting: "Now we will indeed win the war," and congratulating us on our efforts, because we had brought, among the 8 of us, 38 rifles, 25 submachine guns, 2 heavy 50-caliber machine guns and other weapons.

[Question] Where did those weapons come from?

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[Answer] Those weapons were part European and part American and from the government of Pepe Figueres of Costa Rica.

[Question] After that first encounter, how did the guerrilla friendship between the two of you develop?

[Answer] Except for some moments of disagreement, our relations were very good, among other reasons because he exaggerates his praise of those men he considers efficient, as if they were capable of anything. I, for example, belonged to that category, and in fact I rose from civilian to the rank of major in a little over 4 months. At that time I had already begun to be aware of Fidel Castro's personality: a man who knew guerrilla strategy, but not organization; who seemed like the French Tartuffe, appearing before his comrades with a puritan language, giving the impression of being the most honest, the most disinterested, the most devoted to all human beings; speaking from time to time of Marxism without knowing, philosophically, what it is and using only force and crushing anything he felt needed to be crushed.

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CUBA

RAUL ROA SENDS MESSAGE TO ANTINUCLEAR CONGRESS

PA 42156 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1631 GMT 3 Aug 80

[Text] Tokyo, 3 Aug (PL)--Raul Roa Garcia, rotational president of the National People's Government Assembly in Cuba, has sent a message of greeting to the 1980 World Congress of Opponents of Nuclear Weapons here.

The congress sessions closed in Tokyo today to move to Hiroshima on 5 and 6 August and to Nagasaki on 8 and 9 August on the 35th anniversary of the genocide committed by the United States against the two martyred cities in western Japan.

Some 95 representatives of 26 nations including Cuba, Vietnam, the Soviet Union, the GDR, 11 international organizations and over 300 Japanese doves, academic officials, clergymen, trade union leaders and students participated in the 2 days of sessions at the Nihon Seinen Ken hall here.

Roa's message, which was read during a plenary session of the congress, congratulates the congress for remembering the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, keeping the flame of that dreadful drama alive, repudiating those responsible for the massacre and calling for disarmament, peaceful coexistence and detente.

The Cuban leader stated that progressive mankind is now struggling and will continue to struggle to achieve peace for all nations and respect for peaceful coexistence and self-determination.

The message points out that nations have written many great pages in pursuit of their noble longing for independence, progress, justice and development, but it adds that many acts of aggression and conspiracies against detente and international security occur every day.

Mankind is running the risk of again going to the brink of a thermonuclear war of unforeseeable consequences to the human race.

Roa stressed that Hiroshima and Nagasaki are examples of the catastrophic results of the ambition and treason of those who act exclusively on behalf of their interest in power and wealth and forget the suffering that they inflict on their innocent victims.

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25

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NICARAGUA

BRIEFS

BREAK WITH BOLIVIA--Managua, 6 Aug (ANN)--A Foreign Ministry spokesman has said that the break in diplomatic relations between the coupist military regime in Bolivia and Nicaragua, announced on Saturday, does not affect the country's foreign policy because these relations did not exist. The spokesman said that Julio Molina, Nicaraguan ambassador to Peru, who was supposed to be Nicaragua's representative to the La Paz government, had not presented his credentials to the Bolivian authorities. [Text] [PA062238 Havana PRELA in Spanish 1815 GMT 6 Aug 80]

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